

JERSEY CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ANNUAL REPORT OF PROGRESS

1998-99 SCHOOL YEAR

Dr. Richard A. DiPatri
State District Superintendent

August 25, 1999

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INTRODUCTION

At year's end, when aggregate data were analyzed, the scores indicate that students are performing at an all time high in Math and Writing on the HSPT. The district realizes that Reading must be a priority, as the scores have not improved. District personnel have implemented measures as outlined in this report to address the weaknesses noted. Our results are as follows:

- In Mathematics, the district passing rate increased by 8.9 percentage points and exceeded the benchmark of 77.4%. The 1998-99 actual found that 78.7% of the students passed in this area.
- In Writing, the district passing rate increased by 7.1 percentage points and exceeded the benchmark of 81.8%. The 1998-99 actual found that 85.6% of the students had passed in this area, exceeding the State Standard of 85% passing by 0.6 percentage points.
- In Reading, the district passing rate decreased by 5.8 percentage points, falling 10.9 percentage points below the benchmark of 80.0%. The 1998-99 actual found that 69.1% of the students passed in this area.
- The year-end student average daily attendance rate was 89.5%. This was down slightly from the 1996-97 and 1997-98 rates of 91.3% and 91.4% respectively. The district did not meet the yearly benchmark of 90.6%, although the three-year State Standard of 90% was attained (with an average of 90.7%). The decline was largely due to the fact that the stability and continuity of instruction were disrupted by events leading up to, during and following a teachers' strike in November. High schools were closed during the strike after many students became disruptive. During the spring recess, when high schools were kept open to adhere to State mandates, many students chose not to attend, and some students were needed at home to care for younger siblings since the elementary schools were not in session.

This report chronicles the strides made at the high school level only. At this time, elementary school strategies cannot be evaluated due to the lack of ESPA/GEPA data. However, many initiatives have been implemented to address the skills that are being assessed at the 4th and 8th grade levels. (See *Initiatives in the Elementary Schools Aimed at Improving Student Performance* on page 65.)

Although we have a way to go, Jersey City students are achieving at higher levels than they have exhibited during past performance. Strategies that have been implemented in the last few years are beginning to yield results, and greater emphasis has been placed on addressing needs on the high school level this past school year. Where weaknesses have been found to exist, personnel are continually striving to analyze, address and publicize those needs by offering their expertise and assistance and acquiring the services of experts to provide staff development opportunities. The success of all district initiatives, as outlined in the 1998-99 Strategic Plan, is judged on each strategy's contribution towards meeting the established benchmarks.

**SECTION I:
PERFORMANCE ON THE HSPT**

Summary Student Performance & Behavior Indicators
DISTRICT

Indicator		1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99 Benchmark	1998-99 Actual	Difference from Benchmark
READING (%)	4 th Grade Elementary School Proficiency Assessment				N/A		N/A
	Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment				N/A		N/A
	11 th Grade High School Proficiency Test	67.2	65.3	74.9	80.0	69.1	-10.9
MATH (%)	4 th Grade Elementary School Proficiency Assessment				N/A		N/A
	Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment				N/A		N/A
	11 th Grade High School Proficiency Test	71.4	73.5	69.8	77.4	78.7	1.3
WRITING (%)	4 th Grade Elementary School Proficiency Assessment				N/A		N/A
	Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment				N/A		N/A
	11 th Grade High School Proficiency Test	79.2	75.7	78.5	81.8	85.6	3.8
SCIENCE (%)	4 th Grade Elementary School Proficiency Assessment				N/A		N/A
STUDENT BEHAVIOR (%)	Year-End Attendance Rate	89.4	91.3	91.4	90.6	89.5	-1.1
	3-Year Average Attendance Rate	88.9	89.9	90.7	91.1	90.7	-0.4
	Dropout Rate (16 year olds & over)	13.27	14.6*	10.0	10.0	9.3	0.7
*Figure reported at the end of the 1996-97 school year. After the report was submitted, minor changes were made and the new dropout rate became 14.93%.							

Note: The original benchmarks (included in our November 5, 1998, submission of the Strategic Plan) were set based on a three-year plan extending to the end of the 2000-2001 school year. At the request of the State Department of Education, minor revisions were made to this document and the revised version submitted on December 15, 1998) set benchmarks extending to the end of 1999-2000 timeline. Pages 9 and 47 of the December 15 revision of the Strategic Plan do not agree. Benchmarks noted above are calculated based on the 1999-2000 timeline.

Beginning in 1998-99, the MAT was replaced by the ESPA and the EWT was replaced by the GEPA. Scores were not available for inclusion in this plan.

= Met State Standard

EVALUATION OF STRATEGIES

Extended Day (page 15)

Extend school day to provide an opportunity for students to participate in small group innovative instructional activities as an extension of the developmental program to support mastery of the Core Curriculum Content Standards.

Successful ☐

Unsuccessful ☒

Explanation of Success:

Based on the October and April HSPT 11, at-risk 11th grade students were required to attend Extended Day HSPT Prep or Super Saturday and HSPT Summer Institute. While the results were not as promising as we expected in all of our high schools, certain high schools realized a passing rate of 50 percent of the students who attended Extended Day programs (i.e., Dickinson and Lincoln in Math and Lincoln and Snyder in Writing). The following charts compare the percentage of students passing the HSPT who attended at least 90 percent of Extended Day classes and those who did not attend Extended Day classes. Although greater passing rates were realized among students who did not attend Extended Day classes, it must be emphasized that Extended Day classes were prescribed for students in greatest need of academic support. If these students had not attended Extended Day classes, the number of students passing the HSPT might have been lower. The Extended Day classes will continue in 1999-2000 as another means of academic support for students in need. Next year, an administrator will be assigned to observe and evaluate each school's Extended Day Program.

	R E A D I N G					
	ATTENDED EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM			DID NOT ATTEND EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM		
	# Tested	# Passing	% Passing	# Tested	# Passing	% Passing
Dickinson High School (Total # Tested = 598) *	92	23	25	506	260	51
Ferris High School (Total # Tested = 482) *	108	7	6	374	160	43
Lincoln High School (Total # Tested = 332) *	76	33	43	256	137	54
Snyder High School (Total # Tested = 294) *	124	44	35	170	79	46

* Figures denote students tested (of which the overwhelming majority were juniors) comparing those who attended (90% or more) and those that did not attend Extended Day HSPT Prep classes. The Extended Day Program began in September 1998 and ran for the full school year.

	M A T H E M A T I C S					
	ATTENDED EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM			DID NOT ATTEND EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM		
	# Tested	# Passing	% Passing	# Tested	# Passing	% Passing
Dickinson High School (Total # Tested = 571) *	93	59	63	478	346	72
Ferris High School (Total # Tested = 493) *	108	35	32	385	227	59
Lincoln High School (Total # Tested = 351) *	76	38	50	275	145	53
Snyder High School (Total # Tested = 322) *	123	36	29	199	94	47

* Figures denote students tested (of which the overwhelming majority were juniors) comparing those who attended (90% or more) and those that did not attend Extended Day HSPT Prep classes. The Extended Day Program began in September 1998 and ran for the full school year.

	WRITING					
	ATTENDED EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM			DID NOT ATTEND EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM		
	# Tested	# Passing	% Passing	# Tested	# Passing	% Passing
Dickinson High School (Total # Tested = 592) *	93	43	46	499	314	63
Ferris High School (Total # Tested = 473) *	108	43	40	364	198	54
Lincoln High School (Total # Tested = 325) *	75	49	65	250	167	67
Snyder High School (Total # Tested = 269) *	119	66	55	150	64	43

* Figures denote students tested (of which the overwhelming majority were juniors) comparing those who attended (90% or more) and those that did not attend Extended Day HSPT Prep classes. The Extended Day Program began in September 1998 and ran for the full school year.

Super Saturdays (page 15)

Implement a Super Saturday Program at four elementary schools and one high school, available to all district students (based on projected enrollments). Low staff/student ratio will provide for individualization of instruction.

Successful ☐

Unsuccessful ☒

Explanation of Success:

The following charts compare the percentage of students passing the HSPT in April 1999 who did and did not attend Super Saturdays HSPT classes. Based on the October and April HSPT 11, at-risk 11th grade students were required to attend HSPT Prep or Super Saturday and HSPT Summer Institute where they received practice in completing test items which mirrored the State assessment and learned test-taking strategies (e.g., using time wisely, answering the various types of questions, narrowing down choices, etc.). Students who attended the Super Saturdays Program were required to attend 70 percent of the classes in order to receive credit for attendance. Many students attended these classes but not 70% of the time. Some reasons may be:

1. Classes were only offered in one high school and students from all sections of the city had to travel to this site which was a distance from some neighborhoods.
2. Classes for the Super Saturdays program were designed primarily for fun, personal interest and enrichment; however, students were given the opportunity to hone HSPT skills on Saturdays if they were not able to take advantage of the after school Extended Day HSPT Prep classes.
3. Students may have attended classes of personal interest but not the HSPT Prep classes.

Upon analysis of the test data, it became apparent that:

1. All students who participated in the Super Saturdays HSPT Prep were not scheduled to take any or all sections of the test in April 1999. Many had already passed in October 1998.
2. Some students who had not attended 70 percent of Extended Day classes passed section(s) of the HSPT.
3. Many students did not participate in 70 percent of classes.

Considering the low number of students who took advantage of this academic support on a regular basis, it must be concluded that this program has not been effective toward improving students' test scores. The district put much time and preparation into the HSPT Super Saturdays Program. Unfortunately, the attendance records indicate that students who had not passed sections of the test previously did not attend these classes on a regular basis.

Prior to the start of the 1999-2000 Super Saturdays Program, district staff will meet to decide if HSPT Prep classes should remain a part of the Super Saturdays Program. If so, the group will investigate the feasibility of opening a HSPT site either at another high school or elementary school near Lincoln and Snyder High Schools. We suspect that the number of students attending from these two sites may have been low because McNair High School, where the program was held in 1998-99, was closer to Dickinson and Ferris High Schools. In addition, there is a need to strengthen the contract signed by students and parents and provide closer supervision of students attending Super Saturdays HSPT Prep classes. During the next session, attendance sheets will be monitored and parents will be notified when students miss one of the HSPT sessions. Large numbers of students attended the 1999 Summer HSPT Institute; therefore, the decision may be made to focus future efforts on providing academic support during the summer institute and eliminating HSPT Prep from the Super Saturdays offerings.

	READING					
	ATTENDED SUPER SATURDAY PROGRAM*			DID NOT ATTEND SUPER SATURDAY PROGRAM		
	# Tested	# Passing	% Passing	# Tested	# Passing	% Passing
Dickinson High School (Total # Tested = 598)	8 of 16	0	0	123	31	25.2
Ferris High School (Total # Tested = 482)	0 of 2	N/A	N/A	136	25	18.4
Lincoln High School (Total # Tested = 332)	0 of 0	N/A	N/A	119	28	23.5
Snyder High School (Total # Tested = 294)	0 of 2	N/A	N/A	93	25	26.9

*Number tested in each high school may not total number tested who attended Super Saturday Program + students who did not attend Super Saturday Program, as our analysis is based on a 70 percent attendance rate in the Super Saturdays Program.

Tested (Attended column) refers to the number of students tested of the number who attended this program with a 70% or better attendance rate. For example, at Dickinson High School, 16 attended the program but only 8 students took the HSPT in April.

Tested (Did Not Attend column) refers to the number of students who were tested in April (did not pass in October 1998) and did not attend the Super Saturdays HSPT Prep classes.

	M A T H E M A T I C S					
	ATTENDED SUPER SATURDAY PROGRAM*			DID NOT ATTEND SUPER SATURDAY PROGRAM		
	# Tested	# Passing	% Passing	# Tested	# Passing	% Passing
Dickinson High School (Total # Tested = 571)	7 of 17	2	28.6	77	38	49.4
Ferris High School (Total # Tested = 493)	0 of 4	N/A	N/A	85	18	21.2
Lincoln High School (Total # Tested = 351)	2 of 2	1	50.0	108	20	18.5
Snyder High School (Total # Tested = 322)	0 of 1	N/A	N/A	104	31	29.8

*Number tested in each high school may not total number tested who attended Super Saturday Program + students who did not attend Super Saturday Program, as our analysis is based on a 70 percent attendance rate in the Super Saturdays Program.

Tested (Attended column) refers to the number of students tested of the number who attended this program with a 70% or better attendance rate. For example, at Dickinson High School, 17 attended the program but only 7 students took the HSPT in April.

Tested (Did Not Attend column) refers to the number of students who were tested in April (did not pass in October 1998) and did not attend the Super Saturdays HSPT Prep classes.

	WRITING					
	ATTENDED SUPER SATURDAY PROGRAM*			DID NOT ATTEND SUPER SATURDAY PROGRAM		
	# Tested	# Passing	% Passing	# Tested	# Passing	% Passing
Dickinson High School (Total # Tested = 592)	8 of 16	1	12.5	68	22	32.4
Ferris High School (Total # Tested = 473)	0 of 2	N/A	N/A	72	15	20.8
Lincoln High School (Total # Tested = 325)	0 of 0	N/A	N/A	66	15	22.7
Snyder High School (Total # Tested = 269)	0 of 2	N/A	N/A	47	3	6.4

*Number tested in each high school may not total number tested who attended Super Saturday Program + students who did not attend Super Saturday Program, as our analysis is based on a 70 percent attendance rate in the Super Saturdays Program.

Tested (Attended column) refers to the number of students tested of the number who attended this program with a 70% or better attendance rate. For example, at Dickinson High School, 16 attended the program but only 8 students took the HSPT in April.

Tested (Did Not Attend column) refers to the number of students who were tested in April (did not pass in October 1998) and did not attend the Super Saturdays HSPT Prep classes.

Status Report on Whole School Reform in the High Schools *(page 20)*

In May 1998, the Supreme Court directed the Commissioner of Education to develop regulations, which would provide a “thorough and efficient” education mandated by the Abbott decision. The Abbott Regulations mandate a “sweeping reform of education in which the program, staffing, operations and financing of each individual school will be rebuilt from the ‘ground up’ using research-proven programs and strategies.” The regulations require the implementation of Whole School Reform programs that were found to be effective in raising student achievement levels by a study conducted by the Department of Education, and were accepted by the Supreme Court. The major components of this decision are Whole School Reform programs in each elementary school, whole school reform or supplemental programs in each middle and secondary school, full-day kindergarten for five-year olds and half-day preschool for three- and four-year olds in the community by September of 1999.

Many steps were taken this year to adhere to the Abbott regulations and address the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and Whole School Reform implementation. The areas listed below illustrate the direction Whole School Reform exploration has taken in the secondary schools.

- Awareness sessions were held to apprise all stakeholders of the requirements of the regulations, to address their questions and to provide specific information on the various suggested reform models.
- A resource manual was produced to familiarize school staffs with the models and provide timelines for adoption and implementation.
- Meetings and showcases which introduced school personnel to the approved models, sponsored by the Department of Education, were well attended by School Management Teams.
- Training for SMTs was planned with staff input regarding how to operate as a team and adhere to SMT expectations required by “Abbott.” An initial meeting was held, suggested topics were presented and surveys were distributed soliciting additional topics and best times for future training.
- Parent/community showcases were organized to familiarize the community with Whole School Reform efforts and the goals of the various WSR models approved by the Department of Education.
- Plans for exploration of Whole School Reform models were submitted to the State Department of Education.
- Secondary schools began to investigate suitable high school models by compiling information regarding Whole School Reform for use in their schools. They visited schools in other cities and states that had already implemented the models of interest to them.
- Meetings with principals were conducted by district personnel to discuss the SMT model exploration process, to

encourage networking and to pool resources.

- The district investigated sample contracts, set timelines for implementation and provided advice to schools.
- Panel discussions were orchestrated at specific school sites.
- Supplemental Plans were developed in collaboration with School Review and Improvement (SRI) personnel, whereby the SMTs inventoried their existing programs, assessed each program's effectiveness, suggested modifications, decided on necessary programs not currently provided, and prepared an "estimated" budget for the next two years.
- All stakeholders were represented on committees that developed plans related to facilities, decentralization and accountability.
- Coordinators in Health and Social Services and Technology, as well as Dropout Prevention Officers were named at each secondary school.

Successful ☒

Unsuccessful ☐

Explanation of Success:

Our efforts this year have been successful as they have raised awareness (during the development of Supplemental Plans) regarding effective programs currently in the high schools, those programs less than effective and modifications necessary for the future. In addition, distribution of materials on Whole School Reform Models and the organization of awareness sessions for staff, parents, community and SMT members, as well as participation in State Department showcases, better prepared the staffs of the high schools for further exploration in 1999-2000. High Schools will not be selecting Whole School Reform models until the spring of 2000 and will enter Cohort III.

Classroom EXCEL Grants for Teachers (page 20)

Provide competitive grant opportunities in amounts ranging from \$300 to \$1,000 to all instructional staff for creative extensions to the developmental program which serve to support mastery of the Core Curriculum Content Standards.

Successful ☐

Unsuccessful ☒

Explanation of Success:

Teachers at the high school level applied for grants to fund innovative programs in subject areas in which students were not assessed this year. Grants were primarily in the areas of special education, social studies, art, workplace readiness and science. These innovative programs may yield results when additional subject areas are assessed in the future. Although we believe the program has merit, it is not possible to assess its effectiveness toward improving students' performance on the HSPT. However, one EXCEL grant program has received a "Best Practices" designation. It is through such a program that school is interesting and exciting for the students. It offers a balance to drill and test-taking strategies necessary to prepare students for State assessments. By taking part in such programs, students may be motivated to take a more active part in their own education, and teachers will satisfy their creative tendencies.

One of the criteria for awarding a grant is correlation to the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and the district curriculum. The development of innovative strategies that have been proven effective is another criteria used when awarding the grants. During the 1998-99 school year, only ten grants were awarded at the high school level. Four of the ten classes were special education classes. The total expenditure for the high school EXCEL Grant program was only \$10,000. Wider participation from high school teachers has been encouraged and awards will again be based on correlation to the NJCCCS and use of strategies that have proven successful in insuring student achievement. This initiative will not be included in the 1999-2000 Education Plan; however, it will be continued in the district.

High School Curriculum Committees (page 21)

1. Revision of 5-year curriculum cycle

Establish high school curriculum committees by content area with 9-12 grade-level representation to realign content standards and cross-content/workplace readiness standards to district curriculum.

Successful

☐

Unsuccessful

☒

Explanation of Success:

At present, exams have been aligned to the ESPA and GEPA in language arts, math and science, but exams have not been aligned to the HSPA. Curriculum committees are working during the summer, and most math and language arts curricula will be aligned for September 1999 implementation. Therefore, the success of this strategy cannot be evaluated at this time. The entire 9th grade curriculum will be aligned with the Core Curriculum Content Standards by September 1999. Students' performance on midterm and final exams and the ninth grade diagnostic HSPA will yield information regarding the effectiveness of this strategy.

Special Education Initiatives (page 22)

1. Implement a three-year plan (beginning January 1998) for special education beginning developed with the input of district staff, parents, the Advisory Board of Education, and community members to enable special education students to better meet State assessment and Core Curriculum Content Standards and effectively access and utilize the general education curriculum with appropriate modifications.

Successful

☒

Unsuccessful

☐

Explanation of Success:

This is a strategy that will unfold over the course of three years and, at the end of that time, we expect to see improvements in student performance. Our plan outlines expectations for teachers and students, professional development proposals, parental involvement, placement of students, student participation in regular programs, tracking of student information, occupational and physical therapy and after-school programs. Baseline data was not established prior to the implementation of the plan; however, standardized test scores will be available from 1998 on and will be used as a means to monitor student progress. The following is a status report on the strides made to date.

I. Expectations for Teachers

- Essays specifying successful methods in elementary and secondary special education classrooms were distributed to all teachers. This served as one mechanism to raise expectations.

II. Raising Student Expectations

- Students who once were exempt from standardized testing have now been included. Inclusion is the rule; exemption is the exception.
- Portfolio assessment is utilized to provide additional means of assessing progress.

- Approximately \$750,000 has been provided since 1997 for teachers to purchase multi-sensory materials. This enabled students to participate in activities that addressed individual learning styles.

III. Professional Development Proposals

- Teachers of Behavioral Disability and Multiple Disability students have received two full days of training as well as individual classroom consultations and follow-up visits by a hired consultant.
- Special Education teachers were fully included in SIGNA Training, which detailed the development and implementation of learning centers, thematic instruction and multi-sensory strategies. Further professional development opportunities will focus on reading instruction and the use of multi-sensory instructional strategies.
- A veteran teacher monitors all new teachers.
- Social Workers have been trained as behavior consultants in support of BD and MD teachers.
- Initial training has begun for learning consultants in the implementation of model classrooms.
- Classroom assistants and aides undergo training with their BD and MD teachers.
- Four special education supervisors have been assigned as instructional supervisors and receive additional training
- Two special education supervisors concentrate on instructional evaluations of staff.

IV. Placement of Students

- Student placements are analyzed to maximize use of space and ensure continuity of programs.
- District wide inclusive summer, Extended Day and Super Saturday programs have demonstrated that inclusion will work.

V. Student Participation in Regular Programs and Student Attendance Proposals

- Slots have been allotted in Magnet Programs for special education students. The Special Education and Education/Business Alliance Departments are collaborating on a plan designed to transition all special education students into appropriate programs upon exiting elementary school consistent with federal regulations.
- Special education students are included in all Super Saturday and Extended Day programs.

VI. OT/PT and After School Programs

- Multi-sensory programs are used to enhance student skills.

Special Education Staff Training (page 30)

All district teachers of the handicapped will receive staff training and development on reading strategies and active instructional strategies. All special education teachers and LDTs will receive training in the Wilson Reading System for students 14-21 years of age. In addition, special education teachers were included in training provided for general education teachers where they learned of test specifications, use of rubrics and test-specific clusters on the HSPT.

Successful ☒

Unsuccessful ☐

Explanation of Success:

Wilson staff development training was offered two days in May 1999 (due to availability of training opportunities). Teachers also received materials necessary to implement the program successfully. Every reading and English teacher in special education classes at the high school level attended the training to raise proficiency levels in phonological awareness. At this time, it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of this training since it was begun in May. It is hoped that, in the future, the training will promote student achievement on State assessments particularly in reading.

In 1999-00, ten teachers will be selected to become certified Wilson instructors where they will be observed by a Wilson teacher and attend seminars. Our goal at the end of this 3-year plan is to improve instruction for special education students in reading and to bring the level of their instruction up to expectations for the general population so that they may experience success on State assessments. To ascertain if the training produced the desired results in achievement, test scores of students in special education classes will be analyzed to determine improvements made from October 1999 to April 2000 and to compare scores achieved in 1999-2000 and 1998-99.

Improvement of Lowest Performing Schools (page 23)

And

SIGNA Staff Training (page 26)

In accordance with our SIGNA Plans which focus on our lowest performing schools, school improvement training was provided as follows:

- Four (4) comprehensive high schools designated as Schools In Greatest Need of Assistance were targeted for intensive staff development and instructional support. Special education, science and social studies teachers were trained in ways to make their classrooms student-centered. They learned how to best utilized hands-on instructional strategies, ways to develop lessons using cooperative learning techniques and grouping students for maximum engagement in block scheduling. Additionally, they learned ways to integrate reading and math in science and social studies lessons. These staff members received a minimum of 4 days off-site staff training and development.
- A district cadre of twenty-five (25) pool substitutes (fully certified teachers), who received preservice training prior to assignment to fill in for regular education teachers attending professional development activities, was maintained. These pool substitutes rotated from school to school as the training schedule dictated.
- Principals, vice principals, and supervisors were also trained to ensure effective and consistent implementation of training objectives within the 4 schools.

By the end of the 1998-99 school year, 250 staff members in the 4 high schools were trained for a minimum of 4 days each. This intensive training program stressed the importance of instructional techniques linked to mastery of the Core Curriculum Content Standards and State assessments.

Successful ☐

Unsuccessful ☒

Explanation of Success:

Since two of our four comprehensive high schools showed no improvement in the areas of Writing and Math on the HSPT and no growth was seen in Reading across the board, all indications are that this training did not produce the desired results. Success on State assessments is more likely attributable to the types of academic support offered at each individual school. SIGNA training has been discontinued and is not part of the 1999-2000 Education Plan.

Fixed Components of High School Plans (page 25)

Four high schools targeted for failing three (or more) consecutive years implemented high school “Fixed Components to School Plans,” in addition to providing their own plan to address deficiencies:

DHS	All areas
FHS	All areas
LHS	All areas
SHS	All areas

- Repeating 10th and 11th graders are to be scheduled into an appropriate English and mathematics class during the first semester. Twelfth graders who failed any section of the HSPT 11 are to be scheduled into appropriate SRA class(es).
- During October 1998, guidance counselors met with 11th grade students and their parent/guardian to secure a signed contract of agreement to participate in the HSPT Prep Program(s).

Successful ☐

Unsuccessful ☒

Explanation of Success:

In April 1999, ninety-four retained 10th graders took the HSPT in Reading. Of that number, 21.3 percent (or twenty students) passed. One hundred two students took the Math section. Of that number 20.6 percent (or twenty-one students) passed. Seventy students took the Writing section and 28.6 percent (or twenty students) passed.

The chart below compares the performance of retained 10th graders from April 1998 and April 1999. It is obvious that the performance of retained 10th graders in 1999 was not up to the standards established by the previous group in 1998. This may account for lower HSPT scores than anticipated for first-time test takers in April 1999. Although some of the retained 10th graders were able to pass the HSPT, the results are not as promising as would be expected taking into account the variety of academic support classes offered. The efforts of the district's academic and guidance support may yield positive results over time. Guidance counselors will continue to be involved to a greater degree in tracking and scheduling students so that they will have the appropriate classes. In addition, the counselors will keep their parents apprised of their progress towards achieving State Standards and of their attendance at the programs offered to provide assistance in raising their levels of achievement.

SCH.	READING					MATHEMATICS					WRITING				
	# Tested		% Passing		Diff.	# Tested		% Passing		Diff.	# Tested		% Passing		Diff.
	4/98	4/99	4/98	4/99		4/98	4/99	4/98	4/99		4/98	4/99	4/98	4/99	
DHS	34	25	38.2	40.0	+1.8	45	26	35.6	34.6	-1.0	36	22	27.8	54.5	+26.7
FHS	19	7	36.8	14.3	-22.5	18	8	16.7	0.0	-16.7	13	5	38.5	0.0	-38.5
LHS	39	36	41.0	5.6	-35.4	38	41	23.7	21.4	-2.3	30	26	16.7	7.7	-9.0
SHS	14	26	42.9	26.9	-16.0	15	26	40.0	11.5	-28.5	13	17	76.9	35.3	-41.6
DIST.	106	94	39.6	21.3	-18.3	116	101	29.3	20.6	-8.7	92	70	32.6	28.6	-4.0

ACCOUNTABILITY:

Support by Administrative Staff *(page 27)*

- Require a predetermined number of observations be conducted during the course of the year by principals, vice principals and supervisory staff

Staff Accountability *(page 27)*

- Establish a database to track instructional staff who demonstrates less than satisfactory performance.

Staff Development Plan Linked to Supervision *(page 31)*

Design staff development opportunities as a result of supervision of instruction to address teachers' needs as reflected in their Observation Reports and P.I.P.s. This will result in an expansion of the traditional forms of professional development into a comprehensive, ongoing program for teachers and administrative staff closely linked to district- and school-level educational plans, New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards, and student performance standards.

Successful

☒

Unsuccessful

☐

Explanation of Success:

All indications are that increased presence and support of district supervisors in the schools are beginning to produce results. In particular, the following initiatives returned the best teachers to their classrooms, trained the staff in effective strategies and assisted them in aligning their lessons with the requirements of State assessments so that students would be given meaningful practice and gain confidence in testing situations.

- Former high school department chairpersons were returned to their classrooms for full teaching assignments, and district supervisors assumed the positions of department chairpersons. This allowed the best teachers (department chairpersons) to devote their time to teaching and transferred many of their former supervisory duties to district supervisors.
- Practice test materials similar to test specifications were supplied for use across all disciplines in 9th and 10th grades, for 10Rs and all other students who were to take the HSPT this year--focusing efforts on effective strategies and test taking and skill development.
- Materials were carefully selected and developed by the high school mathematics supervisors to ensure that HSPT skills and concepts were appropriately addressed to familiarize students with the format of the test.
- Mini-math meetings were held with teachers once a month on their duty periods to discuss expectations and concerns, as well as to ameliorate problems. Demonstration lessons were presented when necessary.
- Ongoing staff development was linked to needs evident during teacher observations.
- Mathematics supervisors consistently monitored the implementation of curriculum and district policy and the use of a variety of instructional strategies to address the diverse learning styles of students.
- Vice principals closely monitored implementation of district strategies.
- The Associate Superintendent of Instruction visited many classrooms in all buildings with district supervisors and school administrators.
- HSPT sessions for teachers of students who failed the HSPT (10/98) and for science and social studies teachers on how to teach text, as well as content, were designed and delivered.
- Monthly newsletters provided a vehicle to reinforce expectations and to inform the teachers about instructional strategies, workshops and website access.
- Professional development opportunities were offered for teachers through the Eisenhower Grant monies. Teachers participated in: AMTNJ Annual Conference, Casio Calculator Workshops, 3-Day HSPA Conference, 1-Day HSPA Conference, AP Calculus Workshop, 3-Credit Graduate-Level Courses offered at New Jersey City University (Geometry Sketchpad, MicroComputers for Teachers, Discrete Mathematics), and four mini courses at New Jersey

City University focusing on the integration of mathematics and technology.

- Staff development workshops offered in September 1998 for English, science and social studies teachers trained them in ways to develop and promote the writing process, and incorporate higher order thinking skills and the various reading text types in their content areas. Supervisors explained how rubrics are used in an effort to score essays and open-ended questions on the HSPT.
- A plan was developed on how and when to implement the materials and strategies in content area classes, as well as in remedial classes.

We believe that the additional emphasis on teacher observations proved to be successful because supervisors learned of the areas of weakness, inappropriate scheduling practices and ineffective planning for an 80-minute block and were able to provide support and inservice to address those areas. In addition, teachers were held accountable, on a daily basis, for implementing effective strategies learned during staff development. These procedures were begun in the high schools this school year. They will continue during the next school year, with special emphasis on reading strategies across all disciplines. Now that teachers have been trained, the expectation is that their new knowledge will become a matter of practice which will ultimately improve student performance. Monitoring and support by supervisory staff will continue during the 1999-2000 school year.

Comprehensive School Assessment (page 28)

In our efforts to improve our schools, a Comprehensive School Assessment was designed to measure each school's progress in meeting the criteria for successful schools as described in a three-part paper entitled "The Portrait of a Successful School" which was presented to the principals.

A Senior Staff team will carefully analyze whether or not the curriculum is being implemented consistently and efficiently in all grade levels. For example, specific team members will observe instruction throughout the day vertically (e.g., K, 1, 2, 3, etc.), and other team members will observe instruction in a specific grade level or in grade level clusters (e.g., grades 3 and 4, grades 5 and 6, etc.). The team will determine the degree of articulation that exists in the school and whether the district curriculum is being consistently implemented throughout the school. The team will also analyze assessment practices, the level of student expectations, time on task, the organization and management of the instructional setting and the overall effectiveness of the school's instructional team. Members of the team will compile findings and prepare a report. Reports will be shared with the school staffs at scheduled faculty meetings.

Successful ☒

Unsuccessful ☐

Explanation of Success:

The 1998-99 school year was the first year that this strategy was emphasized in the high schools. Although formal assessment was not conducted in all high schools, supervisors and the Associate Superintendent of Instruction, staff members who comprise the Comprehensive School Assessment team focused attention and effort on observation, monitoring, evaluation and training to address noted weaknesses. This emphasis far exceeded prior attention given by district staff on the high school level.

The following table illustrates a comparison of assessment during two visits to Lincoln and Ferris High Schools (one during the 1997-98 school year and the follow-up during the 1998-99 school year). Second visits were conducted at these two sites only. We believe there is a link between the success shown in the Ferris High School HSPT scores this year and the improvements observed during CSA visits--especially in the areas of high expectations, time on task, organization/management and instructional effectiveness.

MONITORED AREAS	LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL	FERRIS HIGH SCHOOL
	Improvement Shown in:	Improvement Shown in:
Curriculum Congruence	2 of 5	2 of 4*
Assessment	0 of 5	2 of 4*
High Expectations	1 of 3	3 of 3
Time on Task	2 of 4	4 of 4
Organization and Management	2 of 7	7 of 7
Instructional Effectiveness	6 of 9	8 of 9

- **One area was not assessed during CSA visits**

ALL NUMBERS DENOTE NUMBER OF MONITORED AREAS.

During CSA visits, the central office staff observes the overall quality of instruction, but content specific information is not on the checklist. District supervisors noted deficiencies in instruction and convened to share their impressions and develop corrective action plans. Staff development attempted to begin “filling in the gaps” in the teaching of reading at the secondary level. Much district effort was directed toward addressing the needs of staff that became evident during Comprehensive School Assessment Team visits. The “18-day Plan” prior to the October 1998 HSPT focused everyone’s attention on district approved instructional strategies. Some outstanding strides were made in writing and math. In the fall after the October HSPT, instruction was interrupted due to the failed teachers’ contract negotiations and strike. Had this event not taken place, our performance on the April 1999 HSPT might have been better in reading as teachers became more proficient in and gained confidence in their ability to address reading in the content areas. Again, it is our plan to assist teachers and monitor the implementation of proven instructional strategies in all high schools to a greater degree during the 1999-00 school year. Special attention will be placed on continuing staff development to improve the level of instruction provided in reading in the high schools.

Educational Technology

Educational Technology Plan *(page 18)*

Develop an Educational Technology Plan to provide access to technology in the schools. With the help of central office staff, schools are required to integrate the available technology into the curriculum.

Successful ☒

Unsuccessful ☐

Explanation of Success:

Educational technology has been upgraded throughout the district and central office staff is developing resources for the schools to aid them in the plans that they will be developing to infuse technology across the curriculum.

Technology Training *(page 29)*

To support our planned expansion of the Educational Technology Program, technology training was provided as follows:

- Additional pool substitutes (fully certified teachers) were hired and given preservice training prior to providing classroom coverage during these activities, and rotated from school to school as the training schedule dictates.
- Two trainers provided training for High School Technology Coordinators at established school-based training sites. These coordinators turnkey trained other teachers at their high schools.
- Five teacher assistants with computer backgrounds and experience were hired and trained in ways to integrate software with the Core Curriculum Content Standards. They served as the technology coordinators in the high school. Additionally, four technicians have been assigned to the high schools and their elementary feeder school to assist the technology coordinator. The computer teachers in the middle schools served as the technology coordinators. Assigned computer teachers in elementary schools served as technology coordinators to SMTs.

Successful ☒

Unsuccessful ☐

Explanation of Success:

The district realizes the importance of making teachers and students technology literate—especially in providing the support to teachers so they will use the available technology in their classes. We believe that our attempts have been very successful as great strides have been made this school year in the areas of teacher training and support, availability of computer equipment and access to the Internet for all staff members. We intend to continue these initiatives during the upcoming school year.

In relation to HSPT scores, this area is difficult to evaluate at the present time. In order to evaluate the implementation of technology across the curriculum, in the future, we will consider adding this section to the CSA monitoring checklist.

Writing Labs (page 17)

Implement writing labs in each high school with word processing and publishing capabilities to assist students in mastering the writing process toward attainment of the Core Curriculum writing standards.

Successful ☐

Unsuccessful ☒

Explanation of Success:

None of the four high schools scheduled students who required writing orientation classes in computer-writing labs. In some high schools, use of the labs was only informally assigned. Of students from the four comprehensive high schools, only Ferris High School used the writing lab consistently—but for students in upper-level classes. In Ferris High School, students (who had already exhibited success on the HSPT in Writing) utilized time in the lab to revise and edit their own written material from other subject area classes. Use of this equipment infused writing and technology tools across the curriculum.

Ferris High School showed growth in Writing on the HSPT; however, the results do not give a clear picture of the impact of the writing labs in improving student achievement in Writing. An analysis of students' scores revealed that, of the 54 students enrolled in the writing lab at Ferris High School, 30 had already passed the HSPT in October of 1998. Six students who had not passed in October 1998 passed in April 1999, and 6 of the remaining 18 students were within 20 points of a passing score.

AREAS OF MODIFICATION

The 1998-99 school year was a turbulent one. Emphasis was placed on improving test scores at the high school level, but interruptions in the school year (particularly, the teachers' strike and events leading up to and following it) made reaching our goals difficult. Many students did not attend the high school on make-up days in March, and some classes were covered by substitute teachers who lacked the training given to classroom teachers earlier in the year. To address the flat reading scores, supervisors delivered staff development sessions and monitored their implementation. However, teachers who had been trained in college as English literature teachers were not familiar with literacy instruction. The district realized that it would take time for high school teachers to master the teaching of reading because they lacked confidence in this area—e.g., how to attack text to gain meaning. Additionally, many were so concerned with covering content within a given timeframe that they were not effectively implementing district-approved reading strategies. The Associate Superintendent of Instruction and two language arts supervisors visited classes regularly to monitor instruction. The magnitude of the job required school administrators to assist them. Unfortunately, high school administrators lacked experience in observing reading instruction. Finally, teachers who expressed an interest in working during Extended Day and Super Saturday classes may not have had experience working with at-risk students, and veteran teachers had not been assigned classes of at-risk students who could have benefited from their expertise. During the 1999-2000 school year, the Central Office staff will address these concerns and will continue their support of initiatives begun during the 1998-99 school year as listed below:

- Careful analysis of tests by district supervisors to raise the instructional staff's awareness of weak cluster areas
- Staff development predicated on information learned during test analysis, zeroing in on weak clusters
- Proper scheduling of students into academic support classes
- Monitoring (by supervisors and the Associate Superintendent of Instruction) that strategies learned during staff development are being implemented effectively and paced appropriately
- Buy-in by teachers in particular high schools.

During analysis of the effectiveness of the 1998-99 Strategic Plan, certain information has come to light. Modifications to current initiatives would:

Replicate strategies utilized in the writing lab at Ferris High School where students revised and edited their own writing across all subject areas and ensure that students who need academic support are assigned to these labs in an effort to improve their writing skills through meaningful activities.

Develop plans to ensure participation and attendance in Super Saturdays HSPT Prep classes which have not produced desired results due to poor attendance.

Administer a mathematics diagnostic test to all tenth graders in September if available. (Reading and writing tests were administered at the end of ninth grade.)

Eliminate remedial electives (math orientation and English orientation) were eliminated from course lists. Language arts literacy electives (with emphasis on reading) will be scheduled for all at-risk tenth and eleventh graders.

Begin the formal teaching of reading in the high schools using new Prentice Hall anthologies beginning in the ninth grade in September.

Provide professional development for high school staff by district staff developers and supervisors. Staff development in September will emphasize ways to infuse reading and math strategies in all content areas. Classes such as "Integrating the "R" Word into the High School Curriculum"; "Prentice Hall Literature and HSPA: Perfect Together"; "Instructional Strategies for Teaching Algebra I and II in the Block"; "Instructional Strategies for Teaching Geometry in the Block"; "HSPT Strategies and hands-on Activities" and "Making the Math Connection with the Use of Technology" will be offered to High School Teachers this summer in an effort to raise students' achievement levels on the HSPT.

Employ a new language arts supervisor, with a background in reading, to work with students and staff in the high schools.

Schedule reading and writing into two separate sessions during Super Saturday HSPT classes (as was done at Snyder High School) rather than provide instruction in language arts (as was done in the other high schools) as this school yielded the greatest improvement in test scores.

Design schedules to address the weakest area and sequence the offerings so that the maximum number of students will remain (during Saturday HSPT classes) for all sessions in which they need academic support.

Encourage lower performing students to attend HSPT Prep classes during Super Saturday Programs by implementing a Super Saturdays HSPT section at a neighborhood high school (close to Lincoln and Snyder High Schools) or elementary school so students from those schools will be more likely to attend.

Encourage the best teachers to work in the Super Saturdays and Extended Day programs. Currently, plans are being developed to entice teachers to work in these after-hours classes.

Phase in math and English ten-credit courses (with built-in academic support and emphasis on reading) beginning with ninth graders in September 1999 that will run for the entire year.

Rewrite the entire curriculum for ninth graders to reflect the Core Curriculum Content Standards aligned with HSPA.

The district has aligned the courses required for graduation in the areas of language arts literacy, mathematics, science and social studies to the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards in grades 9-12 prior to the start of the 1999-2000 school year. The district will align health and physical education, fine and performing arts, world languages and elective courses in all the Core Curriculum Content areas and to the HSPA test specifications during the 1999-2000 school year. Also, significant recommendations were made by the High School Curriculum Task Force which included a revision in the high school graduation requirements, an increase in the number of credits required for graduation and curriculum revisions in a number of courses offered for academic support.

Provide the same staff development opportunities regarding instructional strategies to general education and special education teachers alike. Special education supervisors will be responsible for the same staff support as the regular education supervisors. To ascertain the effectiveness of training offered to special education teachers, students whose teachers attend these classes will be tagged and tracked regarding ability to sit for State assessments and ultimately for performance demonstrated on the HSPT.

Analyze the results of the Reading and Writing diagnostic HSPA, given to all ninth graders in June 1999, so that students who need academic support in grade 10 may begin classes as soon as possible in September 1999.

Monitor Extended Day classes and student attendance closely by assigning a staff member to work with head teachers and visit school sites to determine quality of programs and numbers of students being served.

Guarantee CSA visits to all high schools next year.

Expand the technology requirement in the Comprehensive School Assessment checklist to ensure utilization of technology.

SECTION II: STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Summary Student Behavior Indicators

ATTENDANCE RATE (%)

School	AVERAGE RATE AT YEAR END (6/30)				3-YEAR AVERAGE RATE			1998-99 3-Year Average Benchmark	Actual 3-Year Average For: 1996-97, 1997-98, 1998-99	Difference from Benchmark
	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	For: 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96	For: 1994-95, 1995-96, 1996-97	For: 1995-96, 1996-97, 1997-98			
P.S. #1			88.3	87.7			N/A	88.9*	88.0*	-0.9
P.S. #3	93.2	93.6	93.9	92.2	92.1	93.1	93.6	93.6	93.2	-0.4
P.S. #5	93.4	94.4	95.0	92.3	92.8	93.7	94.3	94.3	93.9	-0.4
P.S. #6	93.5	93.5	94.1	94.0	93.0	93.4	93.7	93.7	93.9	0.2
P.S. #8	91.9	92.3	93.0	91.0	91.0	91.9	92.4	92.4	92.1	-0.3
P.S. #9	90.5	91.4	91.7	89.2	90.0	90.7	91.2	91.2	90.8	-0.4
P.S. #11	93.6	93.2	93.9	91.3	92.8	93.3	93.6	93.6	92.8	-0.8
P.S. #12	89.4	92.0	90.7	89.6	89.0	90.5	90.7	90.7	90.8	0.1
P.S. #14	90.3	92.6	92.0	88.0	90.0	91.0	91.6	91.6	90.9	-0.7
P.S. #15	90.3	91.4	92.4	91.0	88.7	90.6	91.4	91.4	91.6	0.2
P.S. #16	92.4	93.1	94.3	93.1	92.1	92.5	93.3	93.3	93.5	0.2
P.S. #17	93.3	94.0	94.0	92.9	92.2	93.3	93.8	93.8	93.6	-0.2
P.S. #20	92.3	93.7	92.4	90.2	91.6	92.6	92.8	92.8	92.1	-0.7
P.S. #22	91.1	93.1	91.6	91.2	90.6	91.3	91.9	91.9	92.0	0.1

*Both the benchmark and the actual rate provided for P.S. #1 are based on 2-year averages, as P.S. #1 has only been in existence for two years.

P.S. #23	92.0	92.0	93.1	91.0	90.8	91.5	92.4	92.4	92.0	-0.4
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ATTENDANCE RATE (%)

School	AVERAGE RATE AT YEAR END (6/30)				3-YEAR AVERAGE RATE			1998-99 3-Year Average Benchmark	Actual 3-Year Average For: 1996-97, 1997-98, 1998-99	Difference from Benchmark
	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	For: 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96	For: 1994-95, 1995-96, 1996-97	For: 1995-96, 1996-97, 1997-98			
P.S. #24	91.0	92.4	91.6	89.7	90.0	91.6	91.7	91.7	91.2	-0.5
P.S. #25	94.4	94.7	94.9	92.6	94.0	94.5	94.7	94.7	94.1	-0.6
P.S. #27	94.0	94.9	94.8	93.1	93.7	94.3	94.6	94.6	94.3	-0.3
P.S. #28	93.3	93.5	93.9	91.9	92.7	93.3	93.6	93.6	93.1	-0.5
P.S. #29	91.2	92.0	92.3	90.4	90.5	91.3	91.8	91.8	91.6	-0.2
P.S. #30	91.7	92.7	93.3	90.3	91.7	92.1	92.6	92.6	92.1	-0.5
P.S. #31	87.0	87.9	87.2	84.0	89.0	88.0	87.4	90.0	86.4	-3.6
P.S. #33	91.6	92.2	94.2	93.7	92.8	92.3	92.7	93.0	93.4	0.4
P.S. #34	90.7	92.0	92.6	90.6	90.6	91.2	91.8	91.8	91.7	-0.1
P.S. #37	91.5	91.8	91.6	91.2	91.0	91.2	91.6	91.6	91.5	-0.1
P.S. #38	94.2	94.9	94.9	93.6	93.9	94.4	94.7	94.7	94.5	-0.2
P.S. #39	90.0	91.0	89.7	87.8	88.9	90.1	90.2	90.2	89.5	-0.7
P.S. #40	92.2	92.7	91.7	89.4	91.8	92.4	92.2	92.4	91.3	-1.1
P.S. #41	91.0	92.1	92.1	90.0	91.1	91.9	91.7	91.9	91.4	-0.5
P.S. #42	92.6	94.5	94.0	92.0	92.5	93.3	93.7	93.7	93.5	-0.2
D.H.S.	81.3	84.0	84.7	83.1	80.7	81.5	83.3	85.5	83.9	-1.6
F.H.S.	84.7	89.1	88.9	84.4	84.3	85.9	87.6	88.4	87.5	-0.9
L.H.S.	77.3	84.5	83.9	82.7	77.9	79.5	81.9	84.6	83.7	-0.9

ATTENDANCE RATE (%)

School	AVERAGE RATE AT YEAR END (6/30)				3-YEAR AVERAGE RATE			1998-99 3-Year Average Benchmark	Actual 3-Year Average For: 1996-97, 1997-98, 1998-99	Difference from Benchmark
	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	For: 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96	For: 1994-95, 1995-96, 1996-97	For: 1995-96, 1996-97, 1997-98			
M.A.H.S.	96.3	97.0	96.8	95.9	95.7	96.2	96.7	96.7	96.6	-0.1
S.H.S.	72.4	81.0	82.4	81.0	73.6	75.6	78.6	82.4	81.5	-0.9
R.D.S.	90.4	90.1	90.9	83.3	88.7	90.2	90.5	90.5	88.1	-2.4
Academy I*	85.6	92.3	91.4	89.7	N/A	N/A	89.8	89.9	91.1	1.2
Academy II*				82.9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
DISTRICT	89.4	91.3	91.4	89.5	88.9	89.9	90.7	91.1	90.7	-0.4

*Academy I opened during the 1995-96 school year and Academy II opened in September 1998.

Enhanced Student Support System (page 35)

All district schools are expected to meet or exceed the State mandated three-year average attendance rate of 90 percent. In those schools where that standard has not been met or maintained, a school-level plan is required. At all schools, attendance officers will work closely with guidance personnel to maximize student attendance levels.

Successful ☒

Unsuccessful ☐

Explanation of Success:

District-wide, the schools met the State standard for attendance of 90 percent or better. Of the thirty-seven individual schools, seven did not reach their 3-year average benchmark. They are: P.S. #31 and Regional Day School (that serve special education students), one elementary school (P.S. #39) and the four comprehensive high schools (Dickinson, Ferris, Lincoln and Snyder).

To send the message that attendance is a district priority, a Truancy Task Force, whose primary function is to pick-up students who are school age and not in school when school is in session, has been in operation for the past six years. The chart below represents a breakdown of the cumulative statistics for this time period.

Monthly Breakdown of Student Pick-Up by the Truancy Task Force

Year	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	Total
1993-94	22	71	20	45	20	20	50	46	75	23	402
1994-95	No Attend. Officer	15	82	37	37	19	25	No Driver	73	32	320
1995-96	59	86	48	60	21	19	41	311	349	135	1129
1996-97	48	312	212	107	325	243	154	195	52	52	1949
1997-98	167	310	193	117	84	157	120	137	108	47	1440
1998-99	52 No security guard	103	41	53	58	115	97	93	212	20	844

In light of the specific attendance problem at four of the five high schools, the district has reviewed its current policy and is in the process of altering its implementation as it relates to accountability by staff, students and parents. We believe the higher numbers for 1995-1998 indicate the activity of this Task Force. Hopefully, the 1998-99 figures indicate that the message has been received by the students and that other measures to keep students in school are meeting with success.

Interagency Task Force Activities (page 36)

Collaboration between schools and the Interagency Task Force will result in a pooling of community resources to serve students and their families through partnerships between human service agencies, school representatives and neighborhood and community support groups. Monthly Interagency Task Force meetings will be held.

Successful ☒

Unsuccessful ☐

Explanation of Success:

Eleven meetings of the Interagency Task Force were held during the 1998-99 school year. The Task Force is composed of district personnel and representatives from community agencies to provide services to families of Jersey City Public School students. Contributing members of this partnership include the local hospitals, the County Prosecutor's Office, Department of Human Services, the Division of Youth and Family Services, the Job Corps Center, the Probation Office, Catholic Community Services, etc. Members of this group met monthly and, as a result of this collaboration, representatives of the Interagency Task Force will be piloting on-site services to students and their families during the 1999-2000 school year. Services suggested include the following:

- Tutoring or Mentoring Program
- Parent and Family Counseling
- Scouting
- Parenting Group
- Bereavement Counseling (HIV/AIDS -related)
- Pregnancy Prevention Program
- KidCare/Medicaid
- Anger Management (Prevention and Intervention)

Unfortunately, the physical constraints of the building will limit the district to only offering five of the aforementioned programs. It is anticipated that the services provided will not only enhance the quality of life for students and their families, but also will increase student attendance and enrich parental communication with the school. If this pilot program is deemed successful, then consideration for expansion will be made in the late spring of 2000.

District-wide the avenue of communication between school and community services was opened this year when SMTs

met with representatives from the various city agencies that assist students and their families with many of the problems that keep students from attending school regularly. Guidance counselors have received a Resource Manual that lists City agencies so that they will be better equipped to assist families in need.

Student Referral System (page 36)

Implementation of a refined student referral system will result in accurate and timely identification of adolescent students, ages 13-19, requiring prevention or early intervention services with those issues that may impede their academic performance or social/emotional well-being. This system will include school-based health clinics to implement primary care services in addition to existing mental health services.

Successful ☒

Unsuccessful ☐

Explanation of Success:

The school-based adolescent health clinics consist of licensed clinical social workers, health educators, nurse practitioners, registered nurses and HIV counselors. Student services at Dickinson and Snyder High Schools (with a combined enrollment of 3,635 students based on the October 15, 1998 report) include the following:

- Individual counseling
- Group counseling
- Family Planning Education and Pre-conceptual Counseling
- HIV Counseling and Testing
- Pregnancy Testing
- Pregnancy Counseling/ Options Counseling
- Psychiatric Services
- Immunizations
- Parenting Skills and Education

Student services are provided by both scheduled appointment and walk-in visits. Clinic personnel will assure that students receive the services they require. Review of the data indicates that female students are serviced more than males. Male student participation increased slightly when the teenage father's program began. Although services are offered to all high school students within these two facilities, students who utilized the services most frequently were seventeen year olds (31%). Subsequent ranking of the clinic patronage according to age category was sixteen year olds (26%), eighteen year olds and older (23%), fifteen year olds (15%) and fourteen year olds and below (5%). Client-based services sought in order of frequency were: mental health services and counseling, family planning and pregnancy-related counseling, nurse practitioner services, parenting skills and HIV counseling and testing services. Immunization

and psychiatric services were minimally requested.

In addition to the school-based health clinics, the district also utilizes a district service broker and court liaison to assist students in an advocacy and consulting role. Services provided by the district service broker for the 1998-1999 school year are as follows:

District Service Cases Received	105
Case Consultations Received	92
Visits to Schools	251
Agency Visits	33
Home Visits	24
Outside Agency Referrals	172

The type of student/family problems identified in order of frequency are: child mental health needs, including depression and bereavement (29%); parental mental health issues or parental substance abuse (21%); family issues involving the Division of Youth and Family Services (18%); teen pregnancy or parenthood (17%); and, attendance issues (15%).

The staff members who refer the most cases for direct service are guidance counselors and community aides. Consultation services are requested by the Home Instruction Supervisor, outside agencies, Child Study Team members, Student Assistance Counselors, Zero Tolerance staff and teachers. Issues revolved around academic failure with regard to retention, mental health problems and family disputes.

Secondary School Coordinators (page 36)

Dropout Prevention Officers and Health & Social Services Coordinators will be assigned to all secondary schools to assist School Management Teams in procuring necessary programs for the students and will assure implementation of services required by Abbott regulations.

Successful ☒

Unsuccessful ☐

Explanation of Success:

Dropout Prevention Officers and Health & Social Service Coordinators are assigned to all secondary schools to assist the School Management Teams in procuring necessary programs for the students. They will assure implementation of services required by Abbott regulations.

Review of the statistical data available regarding interaction between students and the Dropout Prevention Officers and Health & Social Service Coordinators indicates that the issues most prevalent were drug related (27.92%). Breakdown of the drug related category is as follows in order of frequency:

Marijuana	82.0%
Poly (Multiple drugs)	10.0%
Alcohol	5.8%
Cocaine	1.2%
PCP	0.4%
Stimulants	0.4%
Dealing	0.2%

Review of the aforementioned data suggests that students are using less expensive drug alternatives and are not suspected of dealing on campus. Steroid use was not evident. Although nicotine is a drug and its use by students is frequently observed near school grounds, it is not addressed in any of the reported data.

Other interventions undertaken by the Dropout Prevention Officers and Health & Social Service Coordinators are as follows:

Behavior Problems	16.46%
Family Management	13.90%
Academic Problems	8.92%
Legal Problems	8.44%
Truancy	5.10%
Depression	4.52%
Peer Problems	3.79%
Self-Destructive/Suicide Behavior	2.41%
Grief/Loss	1.86%
Health Problems	1.68%
Miscellaneous Issues	5.00% *

* All other issues for each category were at or below 1.5% and include the following: Divorce, Physical Abuse, Pregnancy, Pregnancy Prevention, Sexual Abuse, Child/Day Care, etc.

Violence/Vandalism/Conflict Resolution Programs (page 36)

Violence/vandalism/conflict resolution programs in the schools will result in a decline in the number of students suspended for violent/disruptive behavior, improvement in overall school climate, increased student self-esteem, and a recognition of the value of communication skills in resolving conflicts. Also, it is expected that mediation will prove far more effective than suspensions or detentions in promoting responsible behavior which will, in turn, facilitate instruction and student academic success in our schools. Conflict resolution/mediation programs will be designed and implemented.

Successful ☒

Unsuccessful ☐

Explanation of Success:

Due to district initiatives focused on conflict resolution and mediation, there was a marked decline in almost all categories of disruptive behavior and violence. During the 1997-98 school year, there were 311 incidents of disruptive behavior resulting in physical abuse as compared to 145 similar incidents during the 1998-99 school year.

Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Program (page 37)

SDFSCA Program activities will assure all students access to support and treatment as needed, and provide necessary staff development and family support to assist students in becoming and remaining drug free. This will increase student attendance, reduce dropouts, and facilitate student learning and academic achievement. It will include: Continuation/expansion of Project ABLE and TIGS; continuation of "Here's Looking at You 2000" curriculum; and, ongoing substance awareness education (parent & community workshops, staff training, and student workshops).

Successful



Unsuccessful



Explanation of Success:

In Project ABLE, 50 high school students provided seven lessons per assigned class regarding drug and alcohol abuse in 21 elementary schools over the course of the year. Over 650 students benefited from this service. Also, two teachers were trained in the "Here's Looking at You 2000" curriculum, and substance awareness sessions were held for parents and staff (six and four respectively). Thirty teachers were trained in the Project ALERT curriculum (Adolescent Learning Experiences in Resistance Training).

The state trend is reflected in Jersey City's substance abuse data for the 1994-95, 1995-96, 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99 school years. There continues to be, however, a greater vigilance on the part of school personnel, community agencies and police leading to higher rates of identification and treatment. When students are suspected of being under the influence, they are referred for Chain of Custody (COC) screens. The 1994-95 statistics documented thirty-seven (37) students; eighty-three (83) in 1995-96; one hundred fifty (150) in 1996-97; one hundred seventy-three (173) in 1997-98 and through June 21, 1999, one hundred two (102) students referred for Chain of Custody (COC) screens.

SECTION III: STUDENT DROPOUT RATE

Summary Student Behavior Indicators

DROPOUT RATE ¹ (16 year olds & over)						
School	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99 Benchmark	1998-99 Actual	Difference from Benchmark
P.S. #1			N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
P.S. #3	0.0	0.0	0.0	MSS	0.0	MSS
P.S. #5	0.0	0.0	0.0	MSS	0.0	MSS
P.S. #6	0.0	40.0	14.3	MSS	0.0	MSS
P.S. #8	2.9	0.0	14.3	MSS	40.0	-30.0
P.S. #9	20.0	0.0	0.0	MSS	50.0	-40.0
P.S. #11	3.7	0.0	0.0	MSS	0.0	MSS
P.S. #12	38.8	0.0	40.0	MSS	0.0	MSS
P.S. #14	14.2	7.7	0.0	MSS	14.3	-4.3
P.S. #15	7.4	36.4	15.4	MSS	9.1	MSS
P.S. #16	0.0	33.3	0.0	MSS	0.0	MSS
P.S. #17	12.5	8.7	8.0	MSS	5.6	MSS
P.S. #20	5.5	25.0	0.0	MSS	0.0	MSS
P.S. #22	10.5	0.0	8.3	MSS	0.0	MSS
P.S. #23	18.5	20.0	50.0	MSS	0.0	MSS
P.S. #24	18.7	40.0	10.0	MSS	12.5	-2.5
P.S. #25	0.0	14.3	14.3	MSS	0.0	MSS
P.S. #27	8.3	0.0	0.0	MSS	0.0	MSS
¹ Dropout rates for the elementary schools must be viewed with caution, as the number of 16-year-olds in attendance is very low and may artificially inflate the dropout percentage.						
P.S. #28	0.0	0.0	0.0	MSS	0.0	MSS

DROPOUT RATE¹ (16 year olds & over)						
School	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99 Benchmark	1998-99 Actual	Difference from Benchmark
P.S. #29	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
P.S. #30	6.2	0.0	0.0	MSS	0.0	MSS
P.S. #33	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
P.S. #34	14.2	20.0	20.0	MSS	25.0	-15.0
P.S. #37	20.0	0.0	0.0	MSS	0.0	MSS
P.S. #38	0.0	0.0	0.0	MSS	0.0	MSS
P.S. #39	0.0	28.6	0.0	MSS	0.0	MSS
P.S. #40	0.0	50.0	0.0	MSS	7.7	MSS
P.S. #41	4.8	0.0	14.3	MSS	9.1	MSS
P.S. #42	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
D.H.S.	12.9	16.5	14.6	MSS	14.0	-4.0
F.H.S.	5.4	6.3	0.7	MSS	1.8	MSS
L.H.S.	20.7	23.2	15.8	MSS	11.5	-1.5
M.A.H.S.	0.0	0.0	0.0	MSS	0.0	MSS
S.H.S.	23.8	17.3	9.2	MSS	10.1	-0.1
Academy I	N/A	37.5	10.0	MSS	21.4	-11.4
Academy II				MSS	15.0	-5.0
DISTRICT	13.27	14.6	10.0	10.0	9.3	MSS
¹ Dropout rates for the elementary schools must be viewed with caution, as the number of 16-year-olds in attendance is very low and may artificially inflate the dropout percentage.						

Dropout Tracking System (page 37)

Continue the implementation of a tracking system to determine the actual status of every dropout during the 1998-99 school year. Provide appropriate follow-up. Assign one staff member for each secondary school to function as Dropout Prevention Officer for early detection of potential dropouts. Utilize forms and procedures for Guidance Department for this purpose.

Continue “*fifteen together*” initiative which is a concerted effort by the district to address those 8th and 9th grade students who are “at risk” of dropping out of school. It is designed to give personal attention to at-risk students and provide an opportunity for them to develop meaningful relationships with mentor/counselors and their peers.

Successful



Unsuccessful



Explanation of Success:

Guidance counselors have done an excellent job this past year providing the district with the background information for each student who has left school (reasons why, where he/she went, etc.). They are required to make referrals of students who may be at risk of dropping out of school to the dropout prevention officer. Guidance counselors submit monthly reports to the State District Superintendent, noting the number of students who dropped out during the previous month and detailing interventions, counseling and follow-up of their specific cases.

The first year of full implementation of the “*fifteen together*” program has been a tremendous help in keeping our 9th graders in school. Due to its success, this program will continue, adding a new cohort during the summer of 1999. During the 1999-2000 school year, we will continue to focus on ways we can keep our children in school and learning.

Alternative Education (page 38)

- Continue implementation and expansion of our alternative education programs and strategies to decrease the number of dropouts in the Jersey City Public Schools. These programs will include: Academy I; Academy II; the Boys' Club Alternative Program; P.S. 17 (Younger Students' Zero Tolerance Site); and, P.S. 29 Annex.
- Plan for Alternative High School to service fifty 9th graders and expand over a 4-year period by admitting fifth 9th graders per year.

Successful ☒

Unsuccessful ☐

Explanation of Success:

Additional classroom space offering a sound educational environment was procured. This enabled us to serve the increased number of students who were in need. Guidance counselors are providing conflict resolution strategies in small groups and on a one-to-one basis in all grades and peer mediation in grades kindergarten through grade 5. The final numbers are as follows: There were a total of 235 students that were referred to the Zero Tolerance sites. One hundred twelve incidents were sent back to the schools to be dealt with on a school level. In regard to the type of incidents that occurred—43 percent of the referred students had a weapon in their possession; 36 percent assaulted a teacher or another student; 14 percent issued a verbal threat to another student or teacher; 6 percent exhibited disruptive behavior serious enough to be referred to a Zero Tolerance site; and, 1 percent were offenses in other categories. Of the entire general education student population—32 percent were in grades K-5; 22 percent were in grades 6-8; 5 percent were in high school; and, 41 percent of the students referred were special education students across all thirteen grade levels. These numbers are higher than last year because the 1997-98 totals reflected five months of referrals. The numbers reported above reflect the entire 1998-99 school year. The recidivism rate was approximately 2 percent.

To address the students on the K-5 grade levels who have exhibited disruptive/violent behavior, Zero Tolerance sites offer behavior modification, small group counseling and academic support to assigned students who are eventually mainstreamed to their "home" schools. In addition, guidance counselors are working in all schools to provide conflict

resolution through small group and one-on-one counseling. Classified students receive the services of school psychologists or school social workers. Some students may also consult with clinical social workers who were hired by the district during the 1998-99 school year. For students classified with behavioral disabilities, their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are reviewed and modified to outline the services that would help them curb their disruptive/violent tendencies.

An alternative high school was planned in collaboration with Hudson County Community College. This school will open on the campus of the college in the fall of 1999.

School-to-Work Opportunities Program *(page 38)*

School-to-Work activities will result in an increase in student placement in full-time employment, or enrollment in appropriate post-secondary career-related education or training upon high school graduation:

- Implement a school-based learning component that provides all students will opportunities for career exploration, guidance in identifying employment and education goals, and for instruction in both academic and technical skills.
- Implement a work-based learning component that provides all students will a planned program of job training and other employment experience related to a chosen career.
- Integrate school-based learning with work-based learning, integrate academic, occupational learning and applied academic training and establish effective linkages between secondary and post-secondary education.
- Begin a partnership with Hudson County Community College, New Jersey City University, and St. Peter's College, which will explore areas of collaboration for our mutual benefit. Opportunities for advanced study, access to sophisticated science equipment, and use of other college resources will open new avenues to our students.
- Provide participating students with the opportunity to choose complete career majors.
- Develop connecting activities that provide a common thread between school-based and work-based learning.
- Provide participating students, to the extent practicable, with strong experience in and understanding of all aspects of the industries that the students are preparing to enter.

- Provide linkage, where appropriate, between career plans and the transition component of Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Successful ☒

Unsuccessful ☐

Explanation of Success:

As part of the School-to-Career grant in which our district participates, the State of New Jersey mandated that funds be set aside to hire an outside evaluator to measure the success of the School-to-Career initiative in our district. Counseling Services Associates (CSA) spent approximately five months in the district speaking to students and parents. Evaluation team members interviewed members of the business community when they attended the many functions conducted at the business sites where our students are trained or work. They spoke to business personnel about how they viewed the quality of our programs and the skills students were bringing to the workplace. On June 3, 1999, CSA conducted an exit conference. The results of the evaluation were excellent. The members of CSA felt there was a wide variety of excellent activities being conducted in the district which enhanced the performance of students in the programs giving them many opportunities to pursue post secondary education and/or employment. An examination of curricula used in the magnet programs showed that high level thinking skills necessary for successful performance on State assessments were stressed, and all core curriculum standards were being met. They felt that district staff had a real interest in working with students and had reached out to a large number of businesses to provide work-based education for our youth. They made several suggestions for program improvement, which we will take under advisement in the near future. Evaluators felt that our programs were "very successful and should stand as a model for all of New Jersey."

Approximately 1500 students participated in all school-to-career initiatives combined. We are actively trying to increase the number of special education students who are included in our programs. At present, we have 61 special education students participating. A draft of a plan to transition more special education students into school-to-career programs, and, ultimately, to post-secondary education or job opportunities, is in the development stages. At present, we have a working agreement with Hudson County Community College and are developing one with New Jersey City University and St. Peter's College.

In the summer of 1998, approximately 800 students participated in a program linking school-based learning with work-based opportunities. A similar program is set for the summer of 1999. The School-to-Career Program in 1998-1999 included internships in the following career majors: Health, Business, Marketing, Commercial Arts, Applied Technology, Travel and Tourism, and Culinary Arts. For the summer of 1999, the director anticipates placing over 200 students in summer internships.

APPENDIX A

Summary Student Performance Indicators

DICKINSON HIGH SCHOOL

11 TH GRADE HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY TEST	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99 Benchmark	1998-99 Actual	Difference from Benchmark
READING (%)	71.7	71.2	81.5	83.3	74.6	-8.7
MATHEMATICS (%)	83.0	85.3	84.2	85.3	93.2	7.9
WRITING (%)	84.9	82.4	83.6	84.9	89.5	4.6

 = Met State Standard

Summary Student Performance Indicators

FERRIS HIGH SCHOOL

11TH GRADE HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY TEST	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99 Benchmark	1998-99 Actual	Difference from Benchmark
READING (%)	62.8	60.5	70.6	77.8	55.6	-22.2
MATHEMATICS (%)	70.3	67.1	64.5	74.8	72.9	-1.9
WRITING (%)	77.6	67.8	74.2	79.6	78.6	-1.0

 = Met State Standard

Summary Student Performance Indicators

LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL

11TH GRADE HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY TEST	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99 Benchmark	1998-99 Actual	Difference from Benchmark
READING (%)	63.4	60.0	68.4	76.7	67.3	-9.4
MATHEMATICS (%)	61.6	65.8	58.7	71.9	67.5	-4.4
WRITING (%)	75.0	76.1	72.5	78.8	88.8	+10.0

 = Met State Standard

Summary Student Performance Indicators

MC NAIR ACADEMIC HIGH SCHOOL

11TH GRADE HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY TEST	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99 Benchmark	1998-99 Actual	Difference from Benchmark
READING (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	0.0
MATHEMATICS (%)	100.0	98.9	100.0	100.0	100.0	0.0
WRITING (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	0.0

 = Met State Standard

Summary Student Performance Indicators

SNYDER HIGH SCHOOL

11TH GRADE HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY TEST	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99 Benchmark	1998-99 Actual	Difference from Benchmark
READING (%)	50.8	47.8	59.8	72.4	55.6	-16.8
MATHEMATICS (%)	43.7	53.8	43.1	64.1	51.5	-12.6
WRITING (%)	63.4	61.9	67.8	76.4	71.3	-5.1

 = Met State Standard

INITIATIVES IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS AIMED AT IMPROVING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Whole School Reform Exploration and Research resulted in six elementary schools (P.S. Nos. 14, 17, 27, 30, 39 and 41) with the confidence in their choices to select models. These schools will begin implementation in September 1999. The remaining schools will continue their exploration with model selection in the spring of 2000. The district's focus has been on sustaining strides made in some schools and assisting schools in greatest need of improvement to break the chain of failure. Of course ESPA, GEPA and HSPT/HSPA Prep has been of paramount importance. Still, the district has not lost sight of the programs that encourage the entire school community to explore, learn and grow. Therefore, EXCEL Grants, Parental Involvement Grants, Super Saturdays, Extended Day and other such programs will be continued for the benefits that they may produce in the long run. The Jersey City School District was proud to receive five BEST PRACTICES awards during the 1998-99 school year, some of which have their roots in the above mentioned initiatives.

During the 1998-99 school year, the Early Childhood Program was expanded and improved. Training was given to the early childhood staff, and one school received NAEYC Accreditation this year with three others (P.S. Nos. 29, 30 and 37) in various stages of application. In addition, the training of the special education staff endeavored to improve the teachers' instructional techniques so that they would be equitable to the general education program. Special education teachers received money to purchase manipulatives, and follow-up training on effective use of these tools was afforded them. Other training was aimed at learning how to infuse reading, math and writing in the other curricular areas and to use cooperative learning and cross ability grouping to aid in student engagement.

To prepare for future assessments, the World Languages Program was begun in the elementary schools serving grades 2 and 5. In September 1999, plans are to expand the program to grades 3 and 6. Alignment of all curricular areas to conform with the Core Curriculum Content Standards has been developed, and district midterm and final exams in reading, writing, math and science have been made to adhere to the State assessments.

The central office staff who comprises the Comprehensive School Assessment Team has visited many of the elementary schools, producing reports with their findings. Schools were then required to develop Corrective Action Plans outlining how they would address any noted deficiencies. Supervisors have assisted in the schools by providing staff development, resources and modeling of effective instructional strategies.

Reading instruction is a district priority and the Reading Recovery Program was expanded in an effort to provide intervention to students who were exhibiting difficulty in mastering the skills necessary to become effective readers. A short-term program, the emphasis is to mainstream the children back to their regular classes for reading instruction with

confidence in their ability to “break the code” and refine their skills.

Technology tools were made available to the classroom teachers and content area specialists, and training was provided to ensure that these tools would be used to bring students up to par with the rapid technological changes that are occurring daily.

Schools designated as Professional Development Schools allowed teachers to work with Fairleigh Dickinson University so that they would be able to share their instructional skills with other “struggling” or new teachers.

Virtually all of our staff development was aimed at improving instruction after careful test analysis to address identified deficiencies on the State assessments.

Guidance counselors met with the State District Superintendent to learn of increasing district expectations and to solicit their input for the important role that these staff members play in the development of the students. Resources in the community were outlined so that the counselors could aid students and their families by referring them to appropriate social agencies.

Parents were called into school to sign contracts when their children did not meet the standard for passing State assessments or were found to be “at risk” after taking diagnostic examinations.

The initiatives outlined above represent only some of the district’s efforts to improve the performance of elementary school students on State assessments and prepare them for the demands of the future tasks that they will be required to accomplish. The district goal is to keep students in school and actively engaged in their studies so that they may rise to the challenges ahead and aim to develop their full potential as lifelong learners.